



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

at the business session on Saturday morning, and the whole question in regard to the date and place of our next meeting was referred to the Executive Committee, with power. If the war continues throughout 1918, as it almost surely will, the government may forbid travel for such purposes. Even if the government does not take this action, the Committee may deem it not advisable for us to meet again during the war. This explains why, contrary to the custom of the times, the name of our next year's meeting-place is printed out in full! There may not be any meeting, so that this information will be of no military value to the enemy.

Wherever and whenever our next meeting is held, it will naturally, judging from the heading of this editorial, be the fiftieth annual meeting of the Association. The fiftieth anniversary will, however, occur at our fifty-first annual meeting because two "annual" meetings were held in the first year of the Association's history.

The officers elected for the coming year, or until we meet again, were as follows: President, Professor Frank Frost Abbott, Princeton University; Vice-Presidents, Professor John A. Scott, Northwestern University, Professor Walter B. McDaniel, University of Pennsylvania; Secretary and Treasurer, Professor Clarence P. Bill, Western Reserve University; Executive Committee, the above-named officers, and Professor Campbell Bonner, University of Michigan, Professor Grace Harriet Macurdy, Vassar College, Professor Francis G. Allinson, Brown University, Professor Richard M. Gummere, Haverford College, Professor Henry R. Fairclough, Leland Stanford Junior University. The new member of the Nominating Committee is Professor Thomas Dwight Goodell, Yale University.

M. N. W.

[At a recent meeting of the Connecticut Section of the Classical Association of New England, the following paper by Dr. Josiah Bridge, of the Westminster School, was read. It is a ringing protest and argument against the abandonment by many colleges of the immemorial distinctive character of the Bachelor of Arts degree. The protest is timely, and we are glad to give it all possible prominence.—EDITOR.]

THE STUPIDEST OF LOSSES¹

"Since all progress of mind," writes Pater, "consists for the most part in differentiation, in the resolution of an obscure and

¹ To avoid a natural but wrong impression, the writer prefixed to this paper when read a word of caution. This paper contains no unfavorable criticism of the classical

complex object into its component aspects, it is surely the stupidest of losses to confuse things which right reason has put asunder—to lose the sense of achieved distinctions.”

The object of this paper is to raise the question whether most of our American colleges have not been guilty of this very crime against truth—of confusing things which experience and right reason have plainly put asunder—while a glorious few are still unflinchingly maintaining the distinction; and, if it prove true that champions of the truth in this gathering are implicated in that stupidest of losses, to raise the further question whether the representatives of Connecticut colleges here assembled cannot concertedly take some action to help repair the damage.

Just about a third of a century, that is, a generation, ago, during the Harvard Commencement season, a Harvard alumnus delivered a Phi Beta Kappa oration entitled “A College Fetish,” in which he attacked the condition then prevailing, that Greek be required for the Bachelor of Arts degree. At that time two Harvard Juniors, destined the following year to take highest final honors in classics, justly proud of the strong Greek department under Goodwin, Allen, and White, made light of the assault. One maintained that no attack on Greek distressed him a whit; it was wholly a question of survival of the fittest; and Greek would prevail on its own merits or fade from lack. The other claimed that if Harvard by any turn of fortune’s wheel every dropped Greek from her course she would thereby inevitably dethrone herself from primacy among American colleges.

Three years after Mr. Adams’ address the president of Harvard announced in his annual report that the long discussion of the requirements for admission to Harvard College was brought to a fortunate conclusion by the adoption of a plan by the corporation

department at Harvard. On the contrary, the writer believes that Harvard standards in classics are maintained by a corps of instructors the peer of any in her history, and unsurpassed in any college in the land. The argument is not that by giving up the requirement of Greek a college thereby weakens the quality of work in her classical department; it is that any college which allows a substitute for Greek in the Arts course, by this very undervaluation naturally lowers the reverence of the student body for that subject and creates a condition which may lead even well-informed friends of that college to measure her progress in classics unfavorably when compared with a college which does not allow such a substitute.—J. B.]

and Board of Overseers, almost unanimously recommended by the college faculty, by which Greek was no longer required for the Harvard Bachelor of Arts degree.

Let us have no obscuring of the issue here. It is not a question of the elective system, by which freer choice was given the pupil to complete his college course. That choice could have been granted and an appropriate degree given for the work done. It was lending the immense influence of Harvard to a redefinition of the meaning of the Bachelor of Arts degree. It was a statement by Harvard that in her estimation a course without Greek was equivalent to a course with Greek. It was confusing things which right reason had put asunder, and by losing the sense of achieved distinctions resulted in the stupidest of losses. For it largely drove out the gold that had stood the test of time by the free coinage of other metals. Furthermore, it has resulted in a long step toward the goal of Harvard's dethronement, foreseen as a possibility by the Harvard undergraduate in '83.

Are these exaggerated statements? A study of the Harvard president's reports makes sad reading for a humanist. In the early eighties from 210 to 250 Freshmen were studying Greek. In '84 the number dropped by just about one-half. Obviously, Freshman Greek was an elective that year. There follow a few years of slight increase or decrease till in '91 there was a sudden drop from 125 to 86. Next year an extra Freshman Greek course was given, and new enthusiasm generated, and for six years the numbers were kept above the hundred mark. Then another decline set in, not stayed by the fact that in '99 Harvard started a beginners' class in Greek. In that year, if my figures are correct, 73 Freshmen were taking Greek, one of whom was a beginner. By the last president's report there were just 42 Freshmen in the Greek classes, of whom 13 were beginners. That is some of the fruit that Harvard is reaping.

I wonder if the Harvard undergraduate today looks with the same reverent pride on her Greek department as we did in the early eighties? I cannot answer that question from direct knowledge, but I have this testimony to offer you from worthy Harvard post-graduates willing to be quoted, that in their estimation Harvard already is being passed in the race. At the last meeting at New Haven of the New England Classical Association two Harvard

Doctors in classical philology, both younger than myself, told me that when they took their degrees the Harvard graduate department was undoubtedly at the head of all American universities in the field of classics; but now two universities had outstripped her. And the two they named were the two large colleges that still require Greek for the Bachelor of Arts degree. Whether the facts were as they stated is not the point here; enough that two loyal sons of Harvard were convinced that they were stating facts.

So far, then, Harvard's redefinition of the meaning of the Bachelor of Arts degree has been followed by an appalling decrease in the number taking Greek in a greatly increased student body, and by a conviction on the part of some of her graduates in a position to know that the leadership in classics has passed from her to other colleges still requiring Greek. If Harvard has sinned and is reaping the fruits of her error, she is not the only offender. Every college that has followed in her wake, with her example as a warning, is at least an equal culprit. How painful to read in the Yale catalogue of 1903, "In 1904 and thereafter *equivalents* will be accepted for the above requirements in Greek." By what scales did Yale weigh her courses to show any subject the *equivalent* of Greek? No sadder delusion has ever enthralled the educational world than that which has seemingly led some to believe that all subjects are created equal. Here, at least, we know that without Greek we should be inestimably poorer, and no equivalent could be found to compensate for the loss.

It was the year of her two hundred and fiftieth birthday that Harvard made the grand refusal. Her ears were deaf to her own prophet, her orator at that birthday celebration, who then warned her against following any so-called "Spirit of the Age," which, if docked of his capitals, might prove a lying spirit, prone to land us in the mire at last. "Let the humanities," he urged, "be maintained undiminished in their ancient right. Leave in their traditional pre-eminence those arts that were rightly called liberal; those studies that kindle the imagination and through it irradiate the reason; those studies that manumitted the modern mind; those in which the brains of finest temper have found alike their stimulus and their repose, taught by them that the power of intellect is heightened in proportion as it is made gracious by

measure and symmetry." After this lapse of a generation, how wholesome to read side by side the oration of Adams, voicing the spirit of the age, and that of Lowell, speaking for all time. Do they not inevitably call up the catalogue of minds made by the poet of the day, "One story intellects, two story intellects, three story intellects with skylight"? In the presence of her three-story intellect with skylight, Harvard chose to follow the two-story intellects with skylight sadly lacking.

For do not these words of Lowell ring eternally true? "On a map of the world you may cover Judea with your thumb, Athens with a finger-tip, and neither of them figures in the *Prices Current*. But they still lord it in the thought and action of every civilized man." Herein is the kernel of the whole matter. The American schoolboys and girls are entitled to an opportunity to enter into their intellectual and spiritual inheritance. Our colleges, by their change of front, have driven Greek from most of the public schools, and so have debarred many from their birthright. What are you going to do to repair the damage? Say, as the president of one great college has said, "It is not my fault"? But by admitting its existence, yet not doing all in your power to remove the fault, it *is* your fault. Why not defy all the lying spirits of the age, and join Princeton and Chicago in their three-degree plan; saying that no student shall obtain the Bachelor of Arts degree without satisfactory first-hand acquaintance with the language and literature of Greece as well as of Rome? Not till then will you do your plain duty to the American scholar in helping him to his birthright.

And what a birthright!

From what a far antiquity, my soul,
Thou drawest thy urn of light! What other one
Of royal seed,—yea, children of the sun,—
Doth so divinely feel his lineage roll
From the full height of man? The immortal scroll
Of thy engendering doth from Plato run,
Colonnos singing, Simois, Marathon!
Into thy birth such secret glory stole.
The kings of thought, and lords of chivalry
Knighted me in great ages long ago:
From David's throne, and lowly Galilee
And Siloa's brook, my noble titles flow.
Under thy banner, Love, devout and free,
Storing all time, thy child I come and go.